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## *Locking the Barn*

A SENATE subcommittee is out with a report summarizing what's publicly known about the technology that the Soviet Union and its allies have acquired in this country, legally and illegally, and put to military use. Based on a six-month CIA study, the report of the Senate's permanent subcommittee on investigations suggests that advanced American technologies have let Moscow make "giant strides in military strength at a minimum of risk, investment and resources." A National Academy of Sciences panel had made a similar finding. The Senate investigation, led by Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) endorses the CIA conclusion that "stopping the Soviets' extensive acquisition of military-related Western technology—in ways that are both effective and appropriate in our open society—is one of the most complex and urgent issues facing the Free World today."

Although much of the relevant information is secret, it is hard to dispute the committee's judgment of the seriousness of the problem. High tech may be a jungle full of commercial wolves with a glint in their eye, but enough is known about the scale of Soviet piracy efforts to sober the skeptical. Moreover, as the committee points out, it is not that the Soviets are applying Western technology to produce more consumer goods: "the evidence is strong that virtually all the

technology they obtain from the West is applied to the Soviet military industry." The committee deserves commendation for bringing Congress into the wider study of whether the barn can be locked.

The subcommittee examined the effectiveness of the executive branch in enforcing existing export controls and made numerous recommendations. Many of these go to shaping up the bureaucracy and adjusting personnel and procedures to the sprawling and ever-expanding nature of the world of technology. American intelligence, for instance, ought to ask what the Soviets are most eagerly hunting for; the Commerce Department should similarly focus its policing of restricted exports.

Other recommendations get into more questionable areas: a new law to let Customs officers make warrantless arrests and searches and seizures in cases of outbound cargo and persons; amendment of the Freedom of Information Act to allow the denial of information requests made by foreign nationals. There is no reason to make it any easier for the Soviets to arm by stealing or piggybacking on American technology. But steps invoked in the name of halting the leakage must meet acceptable civil liberties standards. Congress would do best to turn its first attention to those recommendations most likely to command a consensus.